

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Stuart Symington
Acting Chairman, Senate Armed
Services Committee

SUBJECT: Memorandum for Deputy Director Walters
from Richard Helms, Dated 28 June 1972,
Watergate Affair

25X1 In response to your request this memorandum provides information which appears to be relevant and material to a balanced interpretation of the meaning of Mr. Helms' 28 June 1972 memorandum, a sanitized copy of which is attached. It also responds to your request for a statement explaining the Agency's action with respect to an interview of two Agency officers, [REDACTED] by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Background

Recent speculations in the press and elsewhere contend that the 28 June memorandum appears to be in sharp conflict with Mr. Helms' testimony before congressional committees and Federal prosecutors on the Watergate affair.

This speculation centers around the second paragraph of that memorandum which states in part as follows:

"In short, at such a meeting, it is up to the FBI to lay some cards on the table. Otherwise, we are unable to be of help. In addition, we still adhere to the request that they confine themselves to the personalities already arrested or directly under suspicion and that they desist from expanding this investigation into other areas which may well, eventually, run afoul of our operations."

Circumstances Surrounding Subject Memorandum

The memorandum to General Walters was written in the context of an upcoming trip which was to take Mr. Helms abroad from 1 to 12 July 1972. It was written after Mr. Gray had cancelled a meeting with Mr. Helms scheduled for 28 June and reflects that Mr. Helms told Mr. Gray that General Walters would be available for any meeting scheduled the following week. Mr. Helms was mindful of the fact that General Walters had been Deputy Director only since 2 May 1972 and that Acting Director Gray, FBI, had been in his position an even shorter time. Under these circumstances it was prudent for Mr. Helms to give General Walters guidance that the FBI should not take advantage of this investigation to hurt unrelated Agency operations [] or elsewhere. As of 28 June 1972, Mr. Helms had no way of knowing what the FBI was attempting to get into. As early as 22 June 1972, the Agency had checked with the FBI on the progress of their investigation of Mr. McCord and was advised by the FBI that word had come down from Mr. Gray that the FBI was not to disseminate any information about the case in oral or written form. Moreover, there had been queries from the FBI about Messrs. Ogarrio and Dahlberg without any explanation as to what these individuals represented. Since neither the purpose nor the specifics of the FBI's interests could be established and since, despite Mr. Helms' repeated denials, Mr. Gray persisted in querying about CIA involvement in the Watergate burglary, a sound basis did exist on 28 June 1972 for Mr. Helms' concern with the degree of adherence which would be given to the agreement between the two agencies to advise each other of any activity which impinged upon the activity of the other. Finally, Mr. Helms was also properly concerned about leakage from the FBI compromising CIA sensitive information provided the FBI, which actually occurred.

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Cooperation with FBI Investigation

In every instance when Acting Director Gray was in touch with him, Mr. Helms informed him that CIA was not involved in any matter known to be under investigation by the FBI. Public testimony by Mr. Gray confirming this point includes the following from Mr. Gray's opening statement on 3 August before the Senate Select Committee:

"On Thursday, June 22, 1972, after being briefed by Mr. Charles W. Bates, Assistant Director, General Investigative Division, regarding the latest development in the Watergate case and undoubtedly as a result of information developed at the briefing, I telephoned Director Helms of the CIA. I told him of our thinking that we may be poking into a CIA operation and asked if he could confirm or deny this. He said he had been meeting on this very day with his men, that they knew the people, that they could not figure it out but that there was no CIA involvement."

. . . .

". . . I telephoned [on 27 June 1972] Director Helms of the CIA and asked him to tell me specifically if the CIA had any interest in Mr. Ogarrio that would prevent us from interviewing him. . . Director Helms told me that he would have to check to determine whether the CIA had any interest in Mr. Ogarrio and would call me later. . . Director Helms called me back later that afternoon, told me that CIA had no interest in Mr. Ogarrio. . . ."

. . . .

"On Thursday, July 6, 1972, I met with General Walters in my office. I remember that he delivered to me the writing that I requested and I remember that it indicated the CIA had no interest in Ogarrio or Dahlberg. After reading the document, I concluded that there was no reason for us to not interview Messrs. Ogarrio and Dahlberg. . . ."

During their 28 June phone conversation, Mr. Helms advised Mr. Gray that the Agency had no ties to Kenneth Harry Dahlberg, thus closing out a previous request from the FBI. Also, Gray rescheduled the cancelled 28 June meeting for 6 July with Walters, and Walters' memorandum of the same day states that he told Gray, "In all honesty, I could not tell him (Gray) to cease further investigations on the grounds that it would compromise the security interests of the United States." At that meeting, Walters also

gave Gray a memorandum summarizing all the information that we had reported to the FBI on the matter which, of course, is further proof that there was no Agency involvement. From the above it is clear that Mr. Gray had been firmly and clearly told that there was no CIA involvement. Surely this was not an action to stifle the FBI investigation.

Interviews of Messrs. [REDACTED]

These interviews were scheduled by the field office of the FBI which had been conducting the initial interviews relating to the Watergate affair. It had been established that there had been leaks from the FBI and according to General Walters' 6 July 1972 memorandum, Mr. Gray "called in the components of his Field Office in Washington and chewed them out on this case because information had leaked into the press concerning the Watergate Case which only they had." It was for this reason that we did not want Messrs. [REDACTED] interviewed by the field office of the FBI, but it was always understood that if their testimony was actually needed, someone from Mr. Gray's own office would have access to them at any time. It was also our feeling that misunderstanding of CIA involvement in Watergate could best be avoided if the subject was handled at the top level of the Agency. In this way we could be assured that interviews at the lower levels, with their inevitable broadening beyond the specific question not related to Watergate, but exposing sensitive Agency activities, identities of Agency personnel, etc. would not be conducted on a fishing expedition basis. As events transpired, the instructions from Mr. Gray to the field office to cancel the interviews was not received by the field office until after Mr. [REDACTED] had been interviewed.

Summary

It appears that any balanced interpretation of the meaning of Mr. Helms' 28 June 1972 memorandum must take into account the fact that Mr. Helms, mindful that the Agency was not involved in the Watergate break-in, was issuing instructions, for internal Agency guidance during his absence abroad, that the FBI should not look into any and all Agency operations without some showing of justification for such an investigation. Although the precise language of the memorandum may appear ominous

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NOTE: Long language version of memo that went to Symington. This was cut down to a smaller version (which actually was sent on ~~the~~ November 1973 to Symington.)
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

5 November 1973

The Honorable Stuart Symington
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20310

Dear Senator Symington:

Attached is a copy of the memorandum dated 28 June 1972 from Mr. Helms to the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (General Walters). With the exception of the two names of CIA personnel, there are no security considerations which would prevent declassification of this memorandum. I do point out, however, that the matter has been in the hands of the Special Prosecutor for possible action by that Office with respect to this document. Any public release, therefore, could have an impact on his consideration of possible action in the courts related to this document. Thus, I would recommend discussion with that Office if any action is to be taken to make this document public at this time.

Sincerely,


W. E. Colby
Director

Attachment

~~SECRET~~

EYES ONLY

28 June 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director

SUBJECT: Watergate Affair

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1. Acting Director Gray of the FBI 'phoned me this morning to cancel our meeting scheduled for 2:30 this afternoon. He indicated that he would not be able to get together until next week. I informed him that I would be away but that you would be available with Shackley and [] for any such meeting. I did, however, use the opportunity of this call to make two points to Acting Director Gray: 1) That I would appreciate his calling off interviews with [] (this he agreed to do); and 2) that Kenneth Harry Dahlberg was no agent of the CIA and that we had no ties to him. I stated that our last verifiable contact with him was in May 1961. Acting Director Gray confirmed that this is the same Kenneth Dahlberg about whom he was inquiring as soon as I identified the gentleman as the President of Dahlberg Company in Minneapolis.

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2. I informed Shackley and [] this morning, in preparation for the scheduled meeting this afternoon, that the Agency is attempting to "distance itself" from this investigation and that I wanted them along as "reference files" to participate in the conversation when requested. I told them that I wanted no free-wheeling exposition of hypotheses or any effort made to conjecture about responsibility or likely objectives of the Watergate intrusion. In short, at such a meeting, it is up to the FBI to lay some cards on the table. Otherwise, we are unable to be of help. In addition, we still adhere to the request that they confine themselves to the personalities already arrested or directly under suspicion and that they desist from expanding this investigation into other areas which may well, eventually, run afoul of our operations.

3. This brings you up-to-date as of 3:00, 28 June.

W
Richard Helms
Director

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Committee
file

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

5 NOV 1973

The Honorable Stuart Symington
Acting Chairman, Committee on
Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In response to your request of 2 November 1973, and recent inquiries from Representative Lucien Nedzi, Chairman of the Special Subcommittee on Intelligence, House Armed Services Committee, I have communicated with former CIA Director Richard Helms regarding allegations in the press and elsewhere that a portion of his memorandum of 28 June 1972 to General Vernon A. Walters on the Watergate affair appears to be in sharp conflict with his testimony before congressional committees and Federal prosecutors on this subject.

I am forwarding herewith the text of Ambassador Helms' personal response to your inquiry. I am also sending this response to Representative Nedzi.

It is clear from testimony on the record that in every instance when Mr. Gray was in communication with Mr. Helms, Mr. Helms stated there was no CIA involvement in any matter that he knew was under investigation by FBI, including Mexican activities. This testimony includes:

From Mr. Gray's opening statement before the Senate
Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities
on 3 August:

"On Thursday, June 22, 1972, after being briefed by Mr. Charles W. Bates, Assistant Director, General Investigative Division, regarding the latest development in the Watergate case and undoubtedly as a result of

information developed at the briefing, I telephoned Director Helms of the CIA. I told him of our thinking that we may be poking into a CIA operation and asked if he could confirm or deny this. He said he had been meeting on this every day with his men, that they knew the people, that they could not figure it out but that there was no CIA involvement."

. . .

"... I telephoned [on 27 June 1972] Director Helms of the CIA and asked him to tell me specifically if the CIA had any interest in Mr. Ogarrio that would prevent us from interviewing him . . . Director Helms told me that he would have to check to determine whether the CIA had any interest in Mr. Ogarrio and would call me later . . . Director Helms called me back later that afternoon, told me that CIA had no interest in Mr. Ogarrio"

The record also indicates that Mr. Gray telephoned Mr. Helms on 28 June 1972 to cancel the meeting scheduled for that date. During that conversation Mr. Helms closed out a previous request by the FBI by advising that any investigation of Mr. Dahlberg would not interfere with Agency operations. Mr. Helms also said he would be out of the country but that General Walters would be available for any meeting next week. Mr. Gray did not schedule any further meetings with CIA officials until 6 July 1972 when he met with General Walters. In this connection Mr. Gray testified before the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities:

"On Thursday, July 6, 1972, I met with General Walters in my office. I remember that he delivered to me the writing that I requested and I remember that it indicated the CIA had no interest in Ogarrio or Dahlberg. After reading the document, I concluded that there was no reason for us to not interview Messrs. Ogarrio and Dahlberg. . . ."

In light of the record as developed above, I would like to share with you my personal interpretation of the meaning of the 28 June 1972 memorandum by Mr. Helms. Mr. Helms, mindful that the Agency was not involved in the Watergate break-in, was issuing instructions, for internal Agency guidance during his absence abroad, that the FBI should not look into any and all Agency operations without some showing of justification for such an investigation. Mr. Helms was concerned about leakage from the FBI compromising CIA sensitive information provided the FBI, which actually occurred.

I fully support Ambassador Helms' position that there is clear evidence on the record that the actions of Mr. Helms and General Walters, both before and after 28 June 1972, completely refute the interpretation that the memorandum of that date constituted an order to General Walters to stifle the FBI's investigation of the Watergate break-in.

If we can be of any further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,


W. E. Colby
Director

Enclosure

Distribution:

Original - Addressee (w/att)
1 - DCI (w/att)
1 - DDCI (w/att)
1 - ER (w/att)
1 - OGC (w/att)
1 - IG (w/att)
✓ 1 - OLC (w/att)

OLC:GLC:raw

4 November 1973

Response of Richard Helms to Inquiries from Senator Symington and Representative Nedzi Regarding Helms' Memorandum of 28 June 1972 to General Vernon A. Walters and Related Matters

My memorandum to General Walters of 28 June 1972 was written in the context of an upcoming trip which took me abroad from 1 to 12 July 1972. I was mindful of the fact that General Walters had only been Deputy Director since 2 May 1972 and that Acting Director Gray of the FBI had been in his job an even shorter time. I could not understand why Gray could not find time to see me on 28 June or during the next two days. I wanted Gen. Walters to be cooperative with the FBI so that its investigation of the Watergate break-in could go forward. But I did not want him to permit some kind of a fishing expedition into CIA operations outside the United States There had been queries about Ogarrio and Dahlberg from the FBI without any explanation being given as to what these individuals represented. Since I could not establish the FBI motive and since Gray kept querying about CIA involvement in the Watergate burglary despite my denials, I wanted to insure that the agreement between

the two agencies to advise each other of any activity which touched on any activity of the other was scrupulously followed. Further, I could see from press stories and other events (such as Dean's meetings with Walters on 26, 27 and 28 June) that efforts were being made to implicate the Agency. My sole preoccupation was to prevent this from happening since the Agency was in no way involved in the Watergate break-in, the only illegality which as far as I knew at the time was at issue. Although the precise language of the sentence of my 28 June 1972 memo may sound ominous in light of later findings and testimony, i.e., out of context in time and circumstance, it was simply an effort to see to it that the investigation went forward while I was absent from the country. It was designed to give Gen. Walters guidance, since he was so new to the Agency, to the effect that I did not want the FBI's headquarters or [] taking advantage of this investigation to hurt unrelated Agency operations [] or elsewhere whatever they might be. I had no way of knowing what the FBI was attempting to get into as of 28 June 1972.

I have been informed that Gen. Walters has said that he did not see my memorandum of 28 June 1972, until May or June of 1973. I do not know how or why this happened, and I was not aware that this was the case until some time this year. Since it was an "eyes only" memorandum, it would

probably not have been seen by any other officer of the Agency. I certainly intended Gen. Walters to see the memorandum, but if he did not, it could not have affected his attitude in the 6 July meeting or any other conversations with Mr. Gray.

I believe that there is clear evidence on the record by Gray and Walters that my actions and those of Walters both before and after 28 June 1972 completely refute the interpretation that the second paragraph of my memorandum constitutes an order to Walters to stifle the FBI's investigation. A few days previously, I had firmly and clearly told Gray that there was no CIA involvement. Also, Gray rescheduled the cancelled 28 June meeting for 6 July with Walters, and Walters' memorandum of the same day states that he told Gray, "In all honesty, I could not tell him (Gray) to cease further investigations on the grounds that it would compromise the security interests of the United States." At that meeting, Walters also gave Gray a memorandum summarizing all the information that we had reported to the FBI on the matter which, of course, is further proof that there was no Agency involvement. Surely this was not an action to stifle the FBI investigation.

As for my attitude toward the FBI as of 28 June 1972, I would like to point out there had been leaks from the field office of the FBI which had been conducting the initial interviews. It was for this reason that I did not want interviewed by that office although I was quite

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prepared, and believe I made it clear to Gray, that if their testimony was actually needed, someone from Gray's own office would have access to them at any time. Also, as early as 22 June 197²~~3~~ the Agency security staff checked with the FBI on the progress of their investigation of McCord and was advised by the FBI that word had come down from Gray that the FBI was not to disseminate any information about the case in oral or written form. The accumulation of such facts made me wary of what the FBI might be doing and strongly influenced my efforts to try to keep the Agency from becoming ensnared.

Laurence Stern wrote an earlier article on 10 July 1973 pertaining to me. This article was the subject of a letter from Mr. Colby to Chairman Symington of the Armed Services Committee dated 10 July. What Mr. Colby writes in said letter is accurate.

I have no reluctance to return to the United States to testify before the Senate Armed Services Committee or before the staff of the Special Prosecutor. I find myself with numerous commitments here. I open a US trade center on Sunday evening and am involved in the arrangements for Secretary Kissinger's visit in Tehran on November 9. Also I am scheduled to travel in southern Iran from November 5 to November 8 to visit Iranian oil installations. This trip could be cancelled, but I do not quite see how

I could get to Washington and return by November 9 and still do justice to what would be required of me. I cite these commitments, and others in the week right after 9 November, only to set forth what my problem is.

I have not addressed the question of releasing publicly the text of the 28 June 1972 memorandum since I believe the security and legal implications can best be judged by you on the scene. It is noteworthy that Mr. Cox made his indirect reference to the memo despite Mr. Colby's testimony at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee in July 1973 which reads as follows:

This position (taken in the 28 June 1972 memorandum) was consistent with our concern that investigations might reveal CIA activities and our belief that they were unnecessary since CIA had no involvement in the Watergate incident ... our check indicated that the leads in Mexico did not involve any current CIA assets or activities. Having satisfied ourselves that there was no CIA involvement in the Watergate incident, we were concerned that a possible broadening of the investigation which would reveal CIA foreign activities having no bearing on the Watergate incident would take place.

Please advise me whether the use of the foregoing responses will help to quiet down the current controversy, I am clearly open to advice as to what further I should do if anything seems required.